

November 17, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

I am writing on behalf of the 375,000 members of the Military Officers Association of America to urge you to vote for H.R. 3961, a bill to reform the Medicare and TRICARE physician payment formula, when that legislation comes to the House floor for action this week.

The flawed formula for Medicare payments puts 9 million military beneficiaries at risk in addition to the nation's elderly, because military TRICARE payments are tied to Medicare's.

Access to health care is the single biggest problem for military beneficiaries of all ages, so MOAA has no more important priority. Many providers already won't accept TRICARE's low payment rates, and beneficiaries who don't live near military facilities – including thousands of active duty, National Guard, and Reserve families; retirees; and survivors – are at particular risk.

The 21% cut to Medicare and TRICARE payments – and a cumulative 40% cut over the next several years – called for under current law would make that problem exponentially worse by causing large numbers of providers to stop seeing elderly and military patients.

The last thing our troops in combat should have to worry about is whether their sick spouse or child can find a doctor to treat them.

MOAA believes strongly that it's past time to pass H.R. 3961 and fix the statutory formula once and for all, so Medicare and military patients don't have to continue suffering this annual fear that their families will lose their health care access.

Sincerely,

